

**Abstract**

A data model for accessing data in a relational database in an OLAP system utilizes a multiple-hierarchy dimension. The dimension includes a set of attributes. Each attribute is bound to a column in the relational database. A logical structure is defined, indicating the relationships between the attributes. Hierarchies are defined. Each hierarchy includes a sequence of attributes. A hierarchy provides a common drill-down path that a database user can utilize to access the database. A hierarchy can include a single attribute or a combination of attributes. Both the relationships between the attributes and the sequence of attributes in a hierarchy are defined independent of any restrictions associated with the database.